

INTELLIGENCE IN RECENT PUBLIC LITERATURE

BAY OF PIGS, by *Peter Wyden*. Simon and Schuster, New York 1979. 352 pp.

In the history of the early Kennedy years, the Central Intelligence Agency, and in the lives of those involved, the Bay of Pigs was only an episode—but what an episode! Camelot's escutcheon was blotted and covert action failed in a hlast of publicity at a time when revelation was exceptional rather than, as recently, routine. The career of the genial spymaster Allen Dulles dwindled to an ungraceful end; his heir apparent, the brilliant intelligence innovator Richard Bissell, was banished to corporate hinterlands.

In the wake of the fiasco at the Bay of Pigs a modest wave of literature about the event was generated. Most of it was useful, some was quite good, and all of it was fragmentary. Haynes Johnson's excellent *The Bay of Pigs* in 1962, for instance, was largely the version of the story as related by Cuban exiles.

Now there is a definitive work: *Bay of Pigs*, by Peter Wyden. It is difficult to anticipate a future study which will add much to this account. A Book-of-the-Month Club main selection, the work will reach a popular audience, and it contains enough fresh material to make it a basic reference for scholars and political scientists. Wyden, a professional journalist, has mined the trove of information available under the Freedom of Information Act. But what makes the difference is that he has managed to interview nearly all surviving, senior participants, including retired CIA loyalists who would not, or could not, speak out before. (Apparently he did not talk to Howard Hunt, although he does draw on Hunt's subjective *Give Us This Day*; and the Pentagon colonel seconded to the Agency for military planning refused to see him.) In Havana Wyden interviewed Cuban veterans, among them the ultimate anti-CIA critic, Fidel Castro. This access to new primary sources has been meshed with several years of diligent investigative plodding. The result is a clear view of the Bay of Pigs, in the past only partially discernible through the haze of half-history.

The primary reason—first among many—that the operation was in jeopardy early on was the injudicious escalation from guerrilla warfare to military invasion approved or tolerated by Bay of Pigs planners. None of us who were involved—from CIA, the Kennedy White House, the Pentagon—can or should be exonerated from blame. But a retrospective scrutiny of the failure must focus on what went on in the minds of two remarkable men, John Fitzgerald Kennedy and Richard Bissell. In the case of the former president, Wyden believes that Kennedy approved the operation because he was a new, action-oriented leader disinclined to question a military venture endorsed by Eisenhower, the man who won World War II for the Allies. He speculates that Kennedy received poor counsel from his White House advisors because they were the victims of what Wyden calls "assumed consensus," a bureaucratic malady akin to groupthink. His arguments are convincing.

The author is less successful when he attempts to illuminate the character of Richard Bissell and to explain his actions. Wyden leaves this reader with the impression that he is not really sure *what* he thinks about Bissell. Perhaps the enigma of Richard Bissell's mind will never be fully resolved by any writer, even one of us who knew him well.

Books

Wyden tends to believe that the Bay of Pigs operation would have gone awry even if President Kennedy had not canceled the D-Day air strike. Who can be sure, now? But one observer saw the lack of support to the exiles as vital: Fidel Castro, when asked why the Americans failed, replied, "They had no air support."

The sourest note in Wyden's book is his final sentence, his conclusion: It can happen again.

I doubt it, not in our lifetimes, anyway.

Bay of Pigs, despite some hard knocks it gives CIA, is as objective an account of the ill-fated operation as the intelligence community can expect (the shrillness of Book-of-the-Month Club blurbs and Wyden's talk-show appearances must be attributed to the exigencies of promotion). And, *Bay of Pigs* is, on balance, good history and good reading.

David Atlee Phillips

Intelligence Vignette

THE SPY WHO WENT TO THE MOUNTAIN

In 1806, the United States considered it essential to conduct a military reconnaissance of the entire territory drained by the Arkansas and Red Rivers. Selected to lead the intelligence mission was Lieutenant Zebulon Montgomery Pike, a reliable young officer who, the previous year, had conducted an exploration of the upper course of the Mississippi River.

The cover story selected for the mission was that the expedition was returning a party of Osage Indians to their homelands. Further, if he encountered Spanish forces, he was to contend that he was traveling to the isolated American outpost at Natchitoches, hut had lost his bearings. To reinforce his cover story, it was hoped that he might be able to pay a courtesy call to the Spanish *comandante* at Santa Fe.

On 3 December 1806, Lieutenant Pike first saw the inspiring peak in the Colorado Rockies that was later to bear his name.

Shortly thereafter, Pike's expedition was overtaken and captured by Spanish troops. They were taken first to Santa Fe and then to Chihuahua. The party was finally released and succeeded in reaching Natchitoches on 1 July 1807.

Pike's personal journal of these travels was published, over some military objection, in 1810. It is said to have been one of the few reliable military intelligence documents concerning Mexican territory in the possession of the War Department at the outbreak of the Mexican War some thirty years later.

Commissioned a Brigadier General at the outset of the War of 1812, Pike was killed at the Battle of York (Toronto), Canada, in April 1813. He was 34.

From the Historical Intelligence Collection

Books

THE STORM PETRELS, by *Gordon Brook-Shepherd*. Harcourt, Brace & Jovanovich, New York 1978. 241 pp.

Gordon Brook-Shepherd in this well-researched book treats the experiences of five important apostate Soviet officials who fled the USSR in the period 1928-1938. In the analogy of the title, they were the storm petrels whose appearance presages the flight of other creatures from an atmospheric disturbance not yet visible to the observer. The inspiration of the book can be traced to Brook-Shepherd's extensive interviews with Boris Bajanov in Paris. Bajanov had at one time served J. V. Stalin as a secretary and, as such, had an opportunity to observe how business was conducted at the higher reaches of the Party during the long battle in the Kremlin over Lenin's succession. Bajanov, having witnessed the banishment of Trotsky and the ascendancy of Yagoda, left Moscow in the autumn of 1927 with the intention of escaping across the border into Persia.

In late December he received a permit to hunt boar near Ashkhabad in the company of one Birger, an OGPU captain, who was charged with Bajanov's eventual safe return to Tashkent. Near the border, on New Year's Day 1928, Bajanov offered his companion the options of being shot on the spot or accompanying Bajanov into Persia. Birger, realizing that his mission had failed and all that that fact implied, saw little merit in lingering on Soviet soil.

They traveled south by hill pony, Hupmobile, camel and, finally, by train to Simla, the summer seat of the Raj in British India, where the pair was genteelly debriefed for the first time.

The preliminary British report from Simla, 58 pages in length, was distributed to interested departments throughout India, to British missions in the Near and Far East, as well as to London. Although the Simla authorities urged further questioning in London, the Foreign Office declined to cooperate and, with self-congratulatory cleverness, suggested that the couple be diverted to France. The French authorities welcomed their arrival and Bajanov was particularly gratified since France had always been his intended goal.

Thirteen months after Bajanov's arrival in Paris, Grigory Bessedovsky, charge d'affaires at the Soviet Embassy there, climbed the wall surrounding the embassy courtyard and sought French protection. Because the Ambassador was absent from his post, the French recognized Bessedovsky as the Acting Chief of Mission and declared their solemn obligation to provide protection to him and his family.

Soon after his escape, Bessedovsky contacted the right-wing press and wrote several articles condemning the Soviet regime. Shortly thereafter he succumbed to a better offer from the left-wing emigre press and did a series of contradictory pieces which had the effect of lending credence to the Soviet contention that he was deranged. Bessedovsky's precipitate departure from the fold, as well as subsequent revelations, suggest that financial opportunism rather than ideological apostasy fueled his flight.

Ten months later a new fugitive from Socialism in the East arrived on the Paris landscape. The newcomer was Georgi Agabekov, an OGPU chief, who two years before had led the opera houffe search for Bajanov in and about Meshed, Persia. In October 1929 Agabekov was recalled to Moscow and given a new assignment: The elimination of Bessedovsky in Paris by Myer Trilliser, then head of the Foreign Section

Books

of the OGPU. The following day the mission was canceled and Agabekov was dispatched to Constantinople to take up duties as head of the illegal nets in the region. On arrival in Turkey he advertised for a tutor to provide him with English-language instruction. One of the respondents to his newspaper advertisement was a young English woman with whom he was immediately smitten. Agabekov's love for Elizabeth Streater eventually led him to abandon his duties and escape to France. He married Elizabeth and the couple survived on the limited income he earned as an occasional source for both the British and French intelligence services. His knowledge of clandestine techniques and his ready availability for spot commissions induced the Soviet service to construct a complex provocation operation, calculated to end in Agabekov's abduction or death. The plan resembled a garnished East European version of the "Mexican Prisoner con." The plan aborted and for several years afterward was popularized in the public domain as the "Philomena Affair."

When Yezov replaced Yagoda as Stalin's police chief in 1936, the Old Chekists had cause for apprehension. Many of the NKVD chiefs serving abroad were recalled and, initially, reassured of another posting and encouraged to take leave with their families in the South. A few then wrote letters to colleagues still in foreign countries, explaining that there was no real basis for hesitating to return to Moscow. Having induced a few others to return, their utility to Yezov was exhausted, and they were arrested and executed. The purge of the NKVD was in train.

Ignace Reiss, a senior NKVD chief in Western Europe who saw his immediate superior, Galinsky, fall victim to Yezov's cunning, bolted on 17 July 1937 and denounced Stalin. His remains were found seven weeks later in Switzerland; he had been "rendered harmless" by a mobile squad dispatched by Yezov. The death of Reiss was an unequivocal signal to others of Stalin's determination to cleanse, permanently, the memories of NKVD veterans who had guilty knowledge of his bloody rise to absolute power. Alexander Barmine decamped as Soviet charge d'affaires in Athens. Walter Krivitsky fled his illegal post in Holland, General Alexander Orlov escaped from Spain through Paris and General Lyushknov, NKVD commander in the Far East, sought refuge in Japan.

Brook-Shepherd, who claims no prior intelligence experience, has put five important apostate Soviet officials into a coherent context. Each of the principals had previously written memoirs which the author has corrected and complemented with official documentary materials from U.S., British, British-Indian, French, Belgian and non-communist Romanian files, most of them hitherto unpublished. In addition to Bajanov, the author interviewed Hede Massing, Mme. Agabekov and others with direct knowledge of the events described.

Refreshingly, the author does not dwell nor exhaustively speculate on motivation. Instead, he quite correctly notes that each of the five found himself measuring his life expectancy in hours and each took the sensible option which favored survival. Imputations of lofty motives and sociological complexities were indulgences which came later.

Both the Orlov and Krivitsky cases resulted in prosecutions in the United States and Britain. Krivitsky identified Capt. John Herbert King, a Foreign Office cypher clerk and Soviet agent, in the course of his London debriefing conducted by Jane (not "Janet") Archer of M1-5. Miss Archer, to whom Krivitsky described—but could not name—a British agent of the Soviets who was then with the Franco forces in Spain, later in the war served in Kim Philby's Iberian section of M1-6. (See *My Secret War*, by H.A.R. Philby). Jane Archer is believed by some to have been the model for LeCarre's "Connie Sachs."

Books

The Storm Petrels is in some respects a catalogue of intelligence opportunities lost. The reader is made uneasy by the seemingly abstruse swivelling of the beneficiary governments and the obduracy of the fixed opinions held by officials. Despite the effusive courtesy shown Bajanov by the British political establishment in Simla, Whitehall saw him as a tale-bearing political opportunist, denied him entry into Britain, and fobbed him off on the French.

Orlov in a private meeting with the U.S. Attorney General and the U.S. Commissioner of Immigration and Naturalization was able only to incite those appallingly incurious gentlemen to accede to his remaining in the country. All that they asked of him was his verbal assurance that he would not become a ward of the state; no record was made of the meeting. Fifteen years later, with the death of Staliu and the publication of a four-part series by Orlov in *Life* magazine, he was discovered and subjected to very aggressive handling by the FBI.

There is much in these essentially accurate accounts to raise more important considerations. Brook-Shepherd implies that these events are part of a continuing process which has yielded up informational treasure for 60 years. He is correct. *The Storm Petrels* warrants reading because it stresses the importance of intelligence and counterintelligence opportunities which sometimes attend unplanned events. It also begins to give a long deserved dignity to the role of the "accident" in intelligence successes.

Robert Crowley

Intelligence Vignette

FINAGLE'S FIFTH LAW OF INFORMATION

In his magisterial *The Official Rules*,* Paul Dickson attributes to the immortal Finagle four Laws of Information which have obvious application to intelligence work. In the belief that these laws should be committed to memory by every intelligence officer and project manager, the Editors reprint them below, together with the newly discovered Fifth Law of Information contributed by Dr. Bernard Mooney, a lineal descendant of the Hibernian Sage.

Law I: The information you have is not what you want.

Law II: The information you want is not what you need.

Law III: The information you need is not what you can obtain.

Law IV: The information you can obtain costs more than you want to pay.

Law V: What you are willing to pay will get you exactly that information you already have.

* *The Official Rules*, by Paul Dickson, Delacorte Press, copyright 1978 by Paul Dickson.

Books

A STATION IN THE DELTA, by *John Cassidy*. Scribner's, New York 1979. 380 pp.

Intelligence work and the war in Vietnam are two subjects which have proven difficult to render with both accuracy and conviction in fictional form. John Cassidy, in *A Station in the Delta* attempts to do both. From the point of view of one who has served in Vietnam, the results are mixed.

Mr. Cassidy, a retired CIA officer who served in Vietnam, sets his book in the Delta late in 1967. Toby Busch, the central figure in the story, is what was called a "POIC" or provincial officer in charge. Busch's arrival in the flat and desolate provincial town is well rendered, as are many of the initial impressions he receives of those with whom he will work. Also appropriately reflected are the differing points of view toward the war which appeared at the provincial, regional, and Saigon levels of the CIA structure: Saigon thought the war was being won, those in the provinces believed it was being lost.

I found particularly well described Busch's sense of apprehension as, for the first time, he finds himself in a wartime setting. His reactions to the ominous presence of weapons and the constant possibility of violence recalled vividly my own first reactions to the regional town in which I spent almost two years. During his first night in his new quarters Busch is saved from a B-40 rocket only by his fruitless search for toilet paper. What happens to Busch in terms of combat experience is what I imagined might happen to me, but never did. Busch goes on almost single-handedly to stop a Viet Cong attack on his town; I was shot at only in helicopters and never fired a weapon. The combat sequences in the book have very much of a one-dimensional quality to them, and are not rendered with nearly the depth of feeling with which Mr. Cassidy describes the Vietnamese people with whom he lives and works.

I found Mr. Cassidy's depiction of the Vietnamese culture and his own blundering attempts to deal with it to be the strongest part of the book. Mr. Cassidy obviously had some deep relationships with the Vietnamese during his own tour and the texture of these relationships comes through quite vividly. The strength and fatalism of the Vietnamese, which I found everywhere during my own tour, Cassidy renders with real strength.

Somewhat less effective are the depictions of Busch's relations with his CIA co-workers and superiors. There is a subplot involving a latent stain on Busch's professional escutcheon which is resolved at the climax of the book. I found this account of bureaucratic conflict somewhat overdone, but no more so than the combat scenes which pepper the narrative.

There is a fair amount of sex depicted. Busch, a previously faithful husband, quickly acquires a Vietnamese mistress and also has one vivid encounter with an American nurse. Cassidy portrays accurately the latent sexuality which pervaded Vietnam. He deals compassionately, in my view, with the reactions and behavior of men suddenly freed from all family restraints who found themselves working and living against a background which was both threatening and inviting, sometimes in the extreme.

Cassidy writes knowledgeably of intelligence work. His descriptions of Busch's initial meetings with his Vietnamese counterparts, his reaction to the lack of hard intelligence and the preponderance of rumors, the mixed degree of competence which

Books

Vietnam officialdom represented, and his first meetings with his Vietnamese agent are all well done. These sections of the book, if any, justify this review in *Studies in Intelligence*.

Cassidy's writing is for the most part rather flat, although he is capable of occasional bits of dialogue or descriptive phraseology which drew me back to my own time in Vietnam. Cassidy obviously feels strongly about his experiences there, and I hope that he will try to write another book on the subject, perhaps trying to cover less ground and placing more emphasis on the haunting and ultimately tragic relationships between Americans and the Vietnamese which were spawned in that prolonged conflict.

Donald Gregg

Intelligence Vignette

MOLES

It has become fashionable in media circles to talk about "moles"—those persons who might penetrate CIA or other intelligence entities from within on behalf of our enemies. Part of the fascination of the media with the word "mole" is their belief that this is a new word in this context, probably coined by the British spy-novelist, John Le Carré, in such works as his *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy*, published in 1974. Nothing could be further from the truth.

The following quotation is taken from *The Historie of the Raigne of King Henry The Seventh*, written by Francis Bacon, Lord Verulam, Viscount St. Alban, and published in London in 1622:

"Hee was careful and liberall to obtaine good Intelligence from all parts abroad. Wherein hee did not onely use his Interest in the Leigers here, and his Pensioners which hee had both in the Court of Rome, and other the Courts of Christendome; but the Industrie and Vigilancie of his owne Ambassadors in Forraine parts. . . . Requiring likewise from his Ambassadors an Answer, in particular distinct Articles, respectively to his Questions.

"As for his secret Spialls, which hee did employ both at home and abroad; by them to discover what Practices and Conspiracies were against him, surely his Case required it: Hee had such Moles perpetually working and casting to undermine him. Neither can it bee reprehended. For if Spialls bee lawfull against lawfull Enemies, much more against Conspirators, and Traitors."

Walter Pforzheimer